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ABSTRACT

This paper identifies and analyzes some of the arguments employed by those who feel that "we have done enough" for the less fortunate members of society, who wish to curtail or end Federal involvement in social change, and who have lost sight of the dual goals of individualism and equality of opportunity. These arguments fall roughly into three categories--biological, social, and political--and can be summarized as follows: (1) certain races are genetically inferior; (2) poverty is due to the improvidence or sloth of the poor; and (3) governmental institutions (especially education) are not effective in implementing positive change in individual circumstances. This paper calls attention to the facts that the debate is a very old one and that the critical choice is not between one set of scholarly arguments and another; it is a choice of values and ideals. Social science research is a valuable and necessary tool or map but not a determiner of our destination. Citizens individually and collectively, not just social scientists, must examine their values and their ideals and on that basis determine which way America is to move. (Author/JH)

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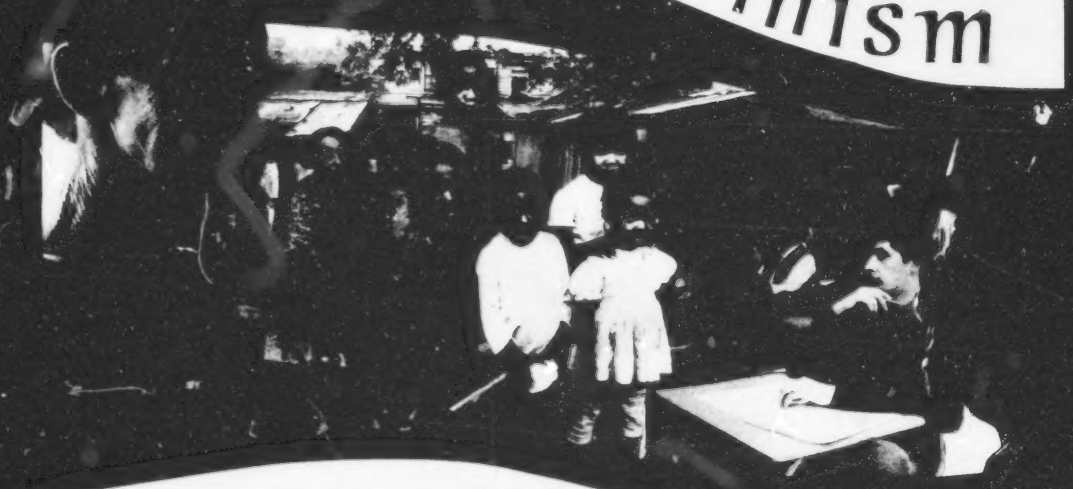

rides again

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PREFACE

Many Americans who, during the 1960s, were involved in the welter of activities focusing on social change have begun to take stock. The realization of healthy cities, equal opportunity and an end to poverty is distant, and it is understandable that those who had expected immediate resolution of deeply-rooted problems now face disappointment.

This is certainly understandable for the low-and moderate-income people living in the Lower East Side of New York, Watts, Little Appalachia in Chicago, a barrio in El Paso, or any other community where the gap between aspiration and reality is chilling. It is difficult for people who bear the brunt of social ills to be satisfied with the platitude that fundamental change is a long-term process.

Yet the chill of disappointment also extends to middle-class government worker, college professor, public official and civic leader, and the consequences are acutely evident. Some have become "drop-outs" from active participation in social change, retreating to private pursuits. Others who are still committed to building a nation for all Americans face uncertainty and confusion, for there are few of the clear-cut and easy solutions that prevailed in the last decade.

Part of this uncertainty and confusion in dealing with social problems is directly related to the mounting criticisms that confront strategies for change. One of the basic strategies of the past two decades—equal educational opportunity—is being challenged by a broad variety of critics. Indeed, the very assumption that the effort is well worth making has increasingly come into question.

The National Urban Coalition is publishing this paper by Dr. Watson because it believes that quality education is essential to the future of cities and their residents. The current discussions between educators concerning strategy and philosophy of educational development are highly important because these often signal future trends in operational school programs that will affect hundreds of thousands of urban youth. The Coalition believes that the debate should be widened—that all urban residents should be aware of these debates and the possible consquences for urban areas.

I believe that the debate can strengthen educational strategies for the 1970s. To cling unquestionably to our assumptions of past decades is to deny that some significant progress has been made or that we have learned a great deal about education in particular and urban change in general. To rekindle the commitment for healthy cities, equal opportunity and better living conditions for low-and moderate-income residents, we must be prepared to enter candidly into the debate, to use what we have learned, and to define a pragmatic strategy for entering our third century as a great urban nation.

Many of the readers of this paper have faced the challenges of the 1960s from a variety of perspectives—putting themselves on the line mentally, emotionally and even physically for school integration, jobs for the unemployed, aid for the disabled and dependent, improved housing, and better health. The progress that has been made has been paid for,

sometimes dearly, by the work, commitment and aspiration of thousands of Americans from all walks of life.

Whatever progress lies ahead will be bought no less dearly. Sensitive educational strategies that develop the awesome potential of the human mind and body are far more subtle and quiet than sit-ins and demonstrations, but they are neither less important nor more easily carried out. Indeed, their implementation can bring us to a new and important milestone in the journey toward a multiracial, multi-ethnic society in dynamic harmony with itself.

M. Carl Holman

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FOREWORD

A debate is raging in this country today—a debate on national priorities and on the role of government in assuring equal opportunity for all citizens. On one side are those who believe that after years of turmoil at home and a controversial war abroad, this country needs above all peace and quiet and relief from governmental pressure to change. On the other side are those who think that the continuing grave social problems of this country require increased, rather than diminished, efforts to solve them. Each side appeals to particular groups within society, and each employs particular "evidence" to support its point of view.

This paper attempts to identify and analyze some of the arguments employed by those who feel that "we have done enough" for the less fortunate members of society, and who wish to curtail or end Federal involvement in social change. These arguments fall roughly into three categories—biological, social and political—and can be summarized as follows:

1. Certain races are genetically inferior
2. Poverty is due to the improvidence or sloth of the poor
3. Governmental institutions (especially education) are not effective in effecting positive change in individual circumstances.

Some of the evidence which is adduced to support these contentions appears to be quite "modern." It comes out of the newer sciences of psychology, anthropology, or sociology, and it is heavily buttressed with extensive statistical data. It thus may appear to the naive or uninformed layman to be incontrovertible—because it is "scientific." And further the unintelligibility of much social science language or statistics may persuade him that the issues are now so complex that public policy must be left to "experts."

It is not the author's purpose in this paper to attack and expose the data and theories of one group of scientists by producing contradictory data and theories. That can be—and is being—done elsewhere. This paper is intended, rather, to call attention to the fact that the debate is a very old one and that the critical choice is not between one set of scholarly arguments and another: it is a choice of values and ideals. Social science research is valuable and necessary, but it must be recognized for what it is: a tool or map. It can tell where we have been, describe where we are, suggest alternatives for the future—but it cannot determine our destination. Those holding scientific credentials have no special right to decide on the goals of our society, and citizens should not accord to social scientists the power to make that decision. Ultimately, each of us as citizens must individually and collectively examine our values and our ideals, and on that basis determine which way America is to move. In a democracy, the choice of destination belongs to everyone.

INTRODUCTION

Poor people and minorities in this country are in trouble. The years of Federal commitment (wavering and ineffectual as it sometimes was) to assist them to do what they could patently not do for themselves appear to be over. They are now told that they have asked too much of government, and that it is time for them to take responsibility, to increase individual effort, and to reduce their expectations. "Shirkers," "welfare chiselers" and "people looking for a handout"—deliberately chosen codewords for the economically powerless or the victims of racism—provide a convenient scapegoat for national frustrations and failures, and the rhetoric is being implemented by the dismantling of OEO and other programs designed to aid the poor and oppressed. Funds for education, welfare, job-training and housing are impounded by the administration—in direct opposition to the will and intent of the Congress. Thousands of persons who have only recently removed themselves from welfare rolls or worked themselves out of abject poverty find their jobs eliminated. The result of these developments is a very clear message to the American poor: you are no longer considered a priority.

Meantime, some members of the academic community have been contributing a remarkable series of scholarly documents which provide a rationale and justification for the abandonment of Great Society policies and programs. Daniel Moynihan's *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding*,[1] Edward Banfield's *The Unheavenly City*,[2] and Nathan Glazer's "The Limits of Social Policy,"[3] are among the works which have been individually and collectively utilized as weapons in the massive assault on the theory and practice of Federal assistance. Simultaneously, old theories of genetic inferiority, reappearing in new versions in the work of such academicians as Shockley,[4] Jensen,[5] and Eysenck,[6] seem to "prove" the futility of equalizing opportunity. Most recently, Christopher Jencks' *Inequality*[7] has proven a source of satisfaction—and ammunition—to opponents of increased aid to education, for it insists that schooling really makes little difference.

Finally, completing the grim circle of opposition to meeting the legitimate needs and aspirations of the excluded members of society, there is the attitude of the "Silent Majority," who, it is alleged, are weary and resentful of social change and who demand a guarantee that they will no longer have to cope with the extravagant plans, the dislocations, the expense and the turbulence which characterized the 1960's. (It is important to note at the outset, however, that this "Majority" is by no means as single-minded and stable in its views as the President and his advisors imply; the electorate which returned him to office also sent to Congress many representatives whose views are quite different from his.)

Confused as they may be, these public attitudes, feelings and points of view, buttressed by the arguments of scholars and implemented by the national administration, constitute what *Social Policy* accurately calls "The New Assault on Equality."[8] It is important, however, to understand that it is precisely that: a *new* assault. The continuing debate over equality

of opportunity is part of a recurring struggle to reconcile the paradoxical nature of the United States' dual commitment to individualism on the one hand and equal opportunity on the other. Both of these concepts—individualism and equal opportunity—have deep roots in the history of our country.

The earliest settlers who came to these shores did so for a variety of reasons: freedom of religion, economic opportunity, individual freedom from oppressive governments, free land, escape from prisons and indebtedness. In the beginning it was possible for most of them to make a new life without undue friction and conflict. But as the nation grew and developed, those who gained a secure footing—social, political or economic—in American society found "individualism" very appealing and readily subscribed to limited government, laissez-faire economics, and libertarianism. Others, whose security and status were less certain, were more likely to welcome governmental regulation and intervention, designed to open for them opportunities which would otherwise have been denied.

The values which have made the United States unique are not always or easily compatible, and the tension between them has frequently been aggravated by its steady expansion from a small and relatively homogeneous country to a vast commercial republic characterized above all by diversity. Anger and fear have regularly accompanied American optimism and faith in progress, and it is hardly surprising that anxiety should often find popular expression in antagonism to certain groups.

For those threatened by social change and its concomitants (real or imagined)—loss of political power, economic insecurity, the fading of their "way of life"—there has always been some comfort and perhaps practical aid to be found in alliances with their like-minded and equally threatened fellows. American history is full of—indeed, it *is*—the story of movements, groups and parties formed, as often as not, to defend a cause rather than to advance one. Simplistic in their diagnosis, as in their proposed remedy, these groups have frequently attacked particular "aliens," whose activities were thought to account for the current distress. Jews, Catholics, Wall Street bankers, the lazy poor, militant blacks, Communists, effete intellectual snobs—separately or collectively—have served as scapegoats for the problems of "100% Americans" who longed for security and stability.

Better-educated or more snobbish citizens may recognize these various outbursts of "native-American sentiment" for what they are worth, and, less affected by popular frustrations, ignore or feel superior to them. But they are not immune from the disquieting effects of change or potential change, and while they consider sloganeering and demonstrations beneath them, they may seek reassurance in scholarly theories which purport to see in existing arrangements the "divine hand" or the culmination of human wisdom.

History is more than the record of outstanding leaders, cataclysmic events and great migrations of people. It is also the story of ideas, beliefs and theories which attempt to bestow meaning on the unrelated fragments

of experience. Let philosophers of history wrestle with the question of how intellectual currents and actual events interact; it is enough here to observe that there *is* a relationship. Each social milieu and political arrangement has its set of explanatory principles which defend the existing status quo, and sooner or later it produces also, in endless Hegelian dialectic, the point of departure for other theories which elucidate the weaknesses of that status quo and justify the need for reform or revolution.

We seem in the mid-1970's in the United States to be at another turning point of history. Some have termed it the end of the Second Reconstruction. Are we to move ahead to full implementation of the American commitment, building on the often hesitant or even reluctant efforts of the last two decades? Or are we to repeat the tragic story of the last century, when the nation moved from the promise of Emancipation to the harsh realities of Jim Crow segregation in the post-Reconstruction era. Will we also, weary of the costs of social change, retreat to rampant individualism and indifference to the plight of those who are handicapped or excluded altogether from the competition for material success?

It would seem that once again, after a period of considerable effort to redeem the promise of America, the forces of fear, timidity, repression and the retreat to privatism have gathered in alarming strength, to provide the necessary justification for tempering our efforts, if not abandoning them altogether. Their message is certainly not new—these recent counsels of restraint are based on theories which have ancient antecedents. But to a nation weary and disillusioned, hurting from years of wild hopes, violence and seemingly interminable change, the message is as seductive as the song of the Sirens, who tried to lure Odysseus away from his perilous voyage: We've done enough, we can't solve all problems, we must be sensible, we can't afford to do everything.

There is still time to reorder our national priorities; Shall we heed these recurring themes which conveniently provide the rationale for "benign neglect" of social inequalities? Or shall we recognize that the American dream is a goal worth every effort and all the pain and stress which inevitably accompany a struggle toward achieving what has never yet been achieved on earth?

It is hoped that this paper will contribute to the clarification of the choice we must make—recognizing that *no* decision is also a choice—and will help to direct public attention to the possible consequences of our choice for the whole society.

A note on the problem of objectivity in social science

It is of great importance, as the themes underlying the "new assault on equality" are identified, to keep clearly in mind the phenomenon described by historian Arthur O. Lovejoy as "metaphysical pathos." Metaphysical pathos is defined as "the set of sentiments with which every theory is associated, but which those subscribing to the theory can only dimly sense." Lovejoy was warning that "a commitment to a theory may be made because the theory is congruent with the mood or deep-lying senti-

ments of its adherents, rather than merely because it has been cerebrally inspected and found valid." [9]

Modern social scientists have frequently stated that it is not only possible but desirable to separate "'facts" from "values" (particularly their own). Only by eschewing intuition or subjective judgment, they argue, can progress be made toward the establishment of social theories as reliable as those which have permitted the physical sciences to advance so rapidly. But in his quest for objectivity, the researcher (and his unwary or naive audience) may too readily ignore the bias inherent in his selection of what to study, his development of hypotheses, and his analysis of the data. Eleanor Burke Leacock describes the problem this way:

> Social scientists aim to achieve an objective, detached, and truly scientific attitude toward society. . . .
>
> Unfortunately, however, the findings of their own sciences, constantly affirm the fact that, though they may constantly strive for the goal of objectivity, they should never assume that it can be completely attained. Social scientists are human beings, which means social and cultural beings whose needs, desires, fears and persuasions must impinge upon their work in various ways. By definition "middle-class," their scientific calling does not automatically make them immune to ethnocentrism when looking at members of the lower classes. Since the vast majority of social scientists are white, their attempts to achieve understanding across black-white lines are also subject to the chauvinism embedded in our culture.[10]

Similarly, John Kenneth Galbraith in his 1972 Presidential address to the American Economic Association called attention to the ways in which economists become captives of their own stereotypes—or of the prevailing political tides. He said:

> Four years ago Mr. Nixon came to office with a firm commitment to neoclassical orthodoxy. In this he was supported by some of its most distinguished and devout exponents in all the land. His subsequent discovery that he was a Keynesian involved no precipitate or radical departure from this faith. The discovery came thirty-five years after *The General Theory;* as I have just noted, all neo-Keynesian policy rests firmly on the paramount role of the market. But then a year and a half ago, facing re-election, he found that his economists' commitment to neo-classical and Keynesian orthodoxy, however admirable in the abstract, was a luxury that he could no longer afford. He apostasized to wage and price control; so, with exemplary flexibility of mind, did his economists. . . . But our admiration for this pliability should not keep us from recalling that, when the President changed course, no American economists were anywhere working on the policy he was forced by circumstances to adopt. And it is even more disturbing that few are now working on the policy which we have been forced to follow.

> More economists, in fact, are still concerning themselves with the effort to reconcile controls with the neoclassical market. This has involved an unrewarding combination of economics and archeology with wishful thinking.[11]

Dr. Galbraith concluded:

> I do not plead for partisanship in our economics but for neutrality. But let us be clear as to what is neutral. (Current economic theory) is the influential and invaluable ally of those whose exercise of power depends on an acquiescent public. If the state is the executive committee of the great corporation and planning system, it is partly because neoclassical economics is its instrument for neutralizing suspicion that this is so.[12]

Another characteristic of the so-called "value free" approach to the study of human affairs is its heavy reliance on statistics. It tends to "reduce" (to numbers) what some would say is "irreducible" (human motives, choices, attitudes) and/or to ignore data which cannot be quantified. Every beginning students of statistics is warned about bias in the selection of samples, the importance of accuracy in "operationalizing" hypotheses (that is, ensuring that the research instrument is capable of uncovering the information desired), and the difficulties of obtaining honest responses. Good statisticians not only heed these warnings but note any difficulties encountered as part of their final report—and, indeed, their findings are, by the very nature of the statistical method, reported in probabilistic terms. Unfortunately, even research which is carefully stamped "tentative" or "suggestive" loses its labels, so to speak, when it is picked up in the popular press or is adopted by advocates of a particular program. No thinking person would deny that the "scientific method" has valuable application to the examination of social problems, but we should not ignore either its limitations or its dangers—particularly the danger of accepting as "objective evidence" what may be the product of unstated or unconscious cultural bias. Such a *caveat* should not, and is not intended to, paralyze efforts to extend knowledge. Nor should it be taken as evidence of anti-intellectualism. Inquiry is always valuable and necessary if we are to avoid stagnation. But the understanding of the inescapable nature of bias should at least lend some humility to our own assertions, while giving rise to healthy skepticism about the pronouncement of others, no matter what their credentials or reputation.[13]

History, although not commonly regarded as a social science, is full of examples of wide variance in interpretations of events, interpretations which differ according to the nationality of the historian or which change in the light of new evidence. Think, for example, of the various ways in which school children might learn about the American Revolution, depending on whether they lived in the United States, France or Great Britain. Another example, of greater pertinence for this paper, can be found in the fascinating shifts in attitude toward the Reconstruction Period.

But acknowledgment of the existence of "metaphysical pathos" in the

work of every social scientist is only half the battle: one must also recognize that any theory or set of data may be adopted by nonscientists in support of their particular positions. Even when social scientists abstain from any attempt to influence public policies, they cannot ignore the unanticipated consequences of their work, the uses to which their findings may, in fact, be put. A notable and agonizing debate still continues over the participation of atomic scientists in the Manhattan Project, or of biologists in work which may be utilized in germ warfare. Noam Chomsky, in his critique of Richard Herrnstein's *Atlantic* article, "I.Q." (to be discussed later), underlines the importance of the "social function of his conclusions," and laments the "lack of concern over the ways in which these 'scientific investigations' were likely to be used." [14] If, Chomsky argues, a psychologist in Nazi Germany were to undertake studies which would support the Nazi belief in the inferiority of the Jews, his protestations of academic freedom and the right to pursue any form of research would be met with "justifiable contempt." [15]

When the theories of a particular social scientist are met with "extravagant praise" despite their possible bias, Chomsky continues:

> We are not dealing simply with a question of scientific curiosity. Since it is impossible to explain this acclaim on the basis of the substance or force of the argument, it is natural to ask whether the conclusions are so welcome to many commentators that they lose their critical faculties and fail to perceive that certain crucial and quite unsupported assumptions happen to be nothing other than a variant of the prevailing ideology.[16]

It is not enough, then, for social science to assert that since "behavioral science denies the very possibility of knowledge of what is good for man . . . questions of the goodness of laws are of no concern to these new scientists as scientists." [17] They must be willing to take responsibility for recognizing not only their own "metaphysical pathos" and their inability to be completely "objective," but also the unanticipated consequences of their research.

Someone once commented that the Supreme Court "follows the election returns." As we proceed to examine the three recurring themes which are at the heart of most attempts to justify inequality, it should become evident that many philosophers and scientists throughout history have also "followed the returns," by engaging in studies which explicitly or implicitly provide a rationale for the success of the "winners."

FIRST THEME: THE GENETIC INFERIORITY OF CERTAIN RACES

That there are differences among men—among members of the same group as well as between one group and another—is obvious to everyone. A major part of literature and science is the record of how men vary, in what they look like, how they act, and what they achieve. Scholars, of course, have always wanted to do more than merely describe, and have pressed on to find explanations for these observed differences. Although some, particularly in recent years, have preferred to study the environmental resources or prevailing social arrangements for clues which might account for individual and group distinctions, others have sought their explanations in men's physical and mental characteristics. The resulting controversy over "nature vs. nurture"—between geneticists, on one hand, and environmentalists, on the other—has more than academic interest. Most, if not all, public policies and private precepts for the proper treatment of the young, the indigent, the criminal or the alien rest on basic assumptions about the reasons for differences between men.

Science, mythology and religion have much in common, for they all developed in response to the apparently universal need for explanation. Moderns may enjoy, but certainly do not believe, the ancient stories dreamed up to explain natural phenomena—lightning bolts as the weapons hurled by an angry Jove, for example. Such simplistic accounts have long since been replaced by scientific explanations, less colorful but more practical in application. But the line between mythology and science is much less clear when human characteristics and behavior are the subjects for investigation. Data are harder to collect; experimentation possibilities are limited; and objectivity, the *sine qua non* of the physical sciences, is difficult if not impossible to achieve in the study of human affairs. Accounts of human phenomena may easily become rationalizations for existing arrangements, rather than mere descriptions of them.

Early versions of theories of inherent inferiority

Throughout history, some men have had greater wealth, been more valiant in battle, or seemed more intelligent, and thus were able to assume the roles of leaders in their societies. Might (however defined) has more often than not made "right:" those who were able to buy or fight their way to the top have easily persuaded themselves and others that it was not simply realistic, but just, to accept their superiority. It is interesting to note how often men have gone on to attribute their good fortune, not to luck or chance, but to innate superiority of some individuals over others. By similar reasoning, entire groups of people who are successful are thought to be so because of their inherent superiority, while others, enslaved or poor, are therefore inherently inferior. A few random examples, widely separated in time and society, should demonstrate how deep-seated this tendency is.

As far back as the fourth century B.C., Aristotle believed that the innate superiority of Greeks to all other peoples was clear. "For he that can by

his intelligence foresee things needed is by nature ruler and master, while he whose bodily strength enables him to perform them is by nature a slave," he wrote. "It is clear that by nature some are free, others slaves, and that for these it is both right and expedient that they should serve as slaves."[18] (Our world "barbarian" derived from the Greek *barbaros*, meaning foreign, non-Greek, and—therefore—uncivilized.)

The absolute monarchs of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, typified by Louis IV and his famous dictum "L'état, c'est moi," were assured by such scholars as Sir Robert Filmer in his *Patriarcha* (1680) that their authority was no less than divine in origin, and hereditary monarchy was supported by the belief that this "divine right" could be and *was* passed on from father to son. Still later, as the Age of Exploration gradually revealed the existence of hitherto unknown lands and people military and economic exploitation of "backward tribes" was exuberantly justified in both moral and religious terms.

An examination of some literature of the nineteenth century indicates that another element, reminiscent of the old "noblesse oblige," was included in the various justifications for conquering other lands: civilized societies were not only inherently superior to uncivilized, but had an *obligation* to share their customs with the less-fortunate, regardless of the cost to either side. The well-known missonary hymn "From Greenland's Icy Mountains," suggests that people outside Western civilization "call us to deliver their lands from error's chain," and asks how "men whose souls are lighted, with wisdom from on high," can, "to men benighted, the lamp of life deny." For those who preferred more secular language, Rudyard Kipling, the poet laureate of the British Empire, provided a similar understanding of what was involved:

> Take up the White Man's burden
> Send forth the best ye breed,
> Go, bind your sons to exile
> To serve your captives need;
> To wait in heavy harness,
> On flutter fold and wild,
> Your new-caught, sullen peoples
> Half-devil and half-child [19]

One wonders how many Victorians ever stopped to wonder why the captive peoples might possibly be "sullen."

It was during this colonialist period that science began to provide the underpinnings for poetic or philosophical theories of racial and genetic inferiority. The ideas and theories of such men as Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer, and Sir Francis Galton were transported to America, where they were enthusiastically adopted, particularly by those who needed a rationale for slavery. Very quickly, American scholars began to report that the new science of ethnology supported the doctrines of the basic inequality of man, and even after slavery was abolished, their theories formed the cornerstone of the policy of strict segregation of the races. An example of early anthropological writing indicates the scientific trend of the time:

> Nations and races, like individuals, have each an especial destiny: some are born to rule and others are born to be ruled. . . . No two distinctly-marked races can dwell together on equal terms.[20]
>
> . . . it is proven that the Negro races possess about nine cubic inches less of brain than the Teuton.[21]
>
> . . . The improvements among Americanized Negroes . . . are solely due to those ultra-ecclesiastical amalgamations which, in their illegitimate consequences, have deteriorated the white element in direct proportion that they are said to have improved the black.[22]
>
> . . . I have looked in vain, during twenty years, for a solitary exception to these characteristic deficiencies among the Negro race.[23]

Closely related to Darwinism, in both its biological and social aspects, was the development of the science of eugenics: it, too, had its contributions to make to the common view that poor health and manners were largely a matter of poor inheritance. Begun by Darwin's cousin, Sir Francis Galton, the eugenist movement found ready acceptance in an America bemused on one hand by the incredible successes of the robber barons and disturbed on the other by the wretched conditions endured by the emancipated Negroes and the hordes of peasant immigrants from Europe. But, as Seymour Lipset and Earl Raab point out, the theory of inherent inferiority provided a convenient way to reconcile the contrast between rich and poor.

> In 1850 more than ½ of those convicted of criminal offenses were foreign-born, though those from abroad represented only 11 percent of the national population. Proportionately, ten times as many foreign as native-born were receiving public support as paupers. A New York State census in 1855 reveals that ½ of the Irish in New York City were either unskilled workers or domestic servants, while in Boston almost ⅔ were in such jobs. Such facts were often gathered and publicized by activist groups as evidence of the inherent inferiority and propensity to immoral behavior of those of non-British-Protestant origin.[24]
>
> And Richard Hofstadter adds that early eugenists tacitly accepted the identification of the 'fit' with the upper classes and the 'unfit' with the lower that had been characteristic of the older social Darwinism. Their warnings about the multiplication of morons at the lower end of the social scale, and their habit of speaking of the 'fit' as if they were all native, well-to-do, college-trained citizens, sustained the old belief that the poor are held down by biological deficiency instead of environmental conditions.[25]

Still another new science, psychology, [illegible]d its authority to popular thinking on race. Thomas Pettigre[illegible]g the appearance of intelligence testing during World War I, comments:

> With few exceptions, the large majority of racial studies in psychology during the 1920's supported racist theories of white superiority. Empirically inadequate and theoretically naive, the racial literature of the decade was characterized by intelligence-test studies of white and Negro Americans that uncritically interpreted the usually higher white I.Q. means as evidence of inherent intellectual differences between the races.[26]

Despite the increasing emphasis on environmental considerations as valid explanations for differences between individuals and groups, the early 1970's witnessed a resurgence of theories of genetic inferiority, with particular reference to their implications for education. A new term from the lexicon of biology was introduced to the public—dysgenics, or "retrogressive evolution through the disproportionate reproduction of the genetically disadvantaged,"—and dysgenic study was advocated as a way of combating "genetic enslavement."[27] It is apparent that the nature *vs.* nurture controversy has not yet been played out.

Modern versions of theories of inherent inferiority

No one disagreed, in the early 1970's, that there were inequalities in educational achievement among the school children of America, but the argument about the causes of these inequalities continued. Those who were inclined toward a genetic explanation for unequal achievement frequently referred to a Winter 1969 *Harvard Educational Review* article by University of California professor Arthur Jensen. Concerned about the assumptions underlying the "compensatory education" efforts which had been encouraged by the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Jensen posed the question "How Much Can We Boost I.Q. and Scholastic Achievement?" He argued:

> The belief in the almost infinite plasticity of intellect, the ostrich-like denial of biological factors in individual differences, and the slighting of the role of genetics in the study of intelligence can only hinder investigation and understanding of the conditions, processes, and limits through which the social environment influences human behavior.[28]

Jensen went on to suggest that it is, in fact, possible to separate the effects of inheritance and those of the environment, that genetic differences characterize the various racial groups, and that if we do not take these into account, all our plans and programs may go awry.

> To what extent can inequalities in attainment among races be attributed to unfairness in society's multiple selection processes? . . . And to what extent are these inequalities attributable to really relevant selection criteria which apply equally to all individuals but at the same time select disproportionately between some racial groups because there exist, in fact, real average differences among the groups—differences in the population distributions of those characteristics which are indisputably relevant to educational and occupational performance? This is certainly

> one of the most important questions confronting our nation today. The answer, which can be found only through unfettered research, has enormous consequences for the welfare of all, particularly of minorities whose plight is now in the foreground of public attention. A preordained, doctrinaire stance with regard to this issue hinders the achievement of a scientific understanding of the problem.[29]

If we were more scientific, Jensen implies, we would ask different sorts of questions, and we would conclude that our faith in education as a way to overcome environmental disadvantages is, at best, misplaced.

> Certain census statistics suggest that there might be forces at work which could create and widen the genetic aspect of the average difference in ability between the Negro and white populations in the United States, with the possible consequence that the improvement of educational facilities and increasing equality of opportunity will have a decreasing probability of producing equal achievement or continuing gains in the Negro population's ability to compete on equal terms.[30]

Reaction to Jensen's article was swift and pointed: the subsequent issue of the *Harvard Educational Review* carried a group of responses from well-known scholars who criticized Jensen's methodology, logic and conclusions. Unfortunately, like most "corrections," the contradictory evidence did not receive anything like the amount of publicity which Jensen's "findings" had attracted. Jerome Kagan, Harvard psychologist, pointed out that while some characteristics (such as height) may be genetically determined, they are clearly influenced by disease or poor nutrition. "The essential error in Jensen's argument," he wrote, "is the conclusion that if a trait is under genetic control, differences between two populations on that trait must be due to genetic factors. This is the heart of Jensen's position, and it is not persuasive."[31] Kagan and others, including J. McV. Hunt of the University of Illinois and William F. Brazziel of Virginia State College (now of the University of Connecticut), denied vehemently that "compensatory education has failed," and called attention both to the extremely limited nature of such efforts as Head Start and to the hard evidence of children's improved achievement with even minor improvements in their educational settings.[32]

Even a respondent who said that he agreed "for the most part with Jensen's analysis," stated that he had "less confidence than (Jensen) in the quantitative validity of the methods—more reservations about the reality of the necessary assumptions."[33] In a later issue of the *Review*, Martin Deutsch, reviewing the psychological and social science literature on the topic stated: "The conclusion is inescapable that the central theme of the Jensen piece is a wholly anti-democratic eugenic position. . . . I found many erroneous statements, misinterpretations, and misunderstandings of the nature of intelligence, intelligence tests, genetic determination of traits, education in general, and compensatory education in particular."[34] Deutsch closed his article with an appeal to Jensen to re-examine

the evidence, to recognize the "negative effect on social progress" which his article had had, and to "summon the social courage necessary to repudiate the positions which have been taken in his name."[35]

The controversy was renewed when the *Atlantic* (a periodical which, if not exactly "popular," is not like the *Harvard Educational Review*, a scholarly and professional journal) published an article, entitled merely "I.Q." Its author, Harvard psychologist Richard Herrnstein, reiterated the plea for cool examination of the "facts," whether or not they fit in with preconceived notions.[36] Reviewing Jensen's findings, he noted that most estimates of the heritability of I.Q. are based on data from whites and comparable statements about the heritability of I.Q. among blacks cannot yet be made. But, he pointed out,

> . . . a neutral commentator (a rarity these days) would have to say that the case is simply not settled, given our present stage of knowledge. To advance this knowledge would not be easy, but it could certainly be done with sufficient ingenuity and hard work. To anyone who is curious about the question and who feels competent to try to answer it, it is at least irritating to be told that the answer is either unknowable or better not known, and both enjoinders are often heard. And there is, of course, a still more fundamental issue at stake, which should concern even those who are neither curious about nor competent to study racial differences in I.Q. It is whether inquiry shall (again) be shut off because someone thinks society is best left in ignorance.[37]

Herrnstein's major point is that if intelligence is largely heritable, improvements in the environment will simply improve the prospects for those who are already favored. The rich, in other words, will get richer, and as the gap widens society will sort itself "willy-nilly into inherited castes."

> What is most troubling about this prospect is that the growth of a virtually hereditary meritocracy will arise out of the successful realization of contemporary political and social goals. The more we succeed in achieving relatively unimpeded social mobility, adequate wealth, the end of drudgery, and wholesome environment, the more forcefully does the syllogism apply. . . .
>
> Greater wealth, health, freedom, fairness, and educational opportunity are not going to give us the equalitarian society of our philosophical heritage. It will instead give us a society sharply graduated, with ever greater innate separation between the top and the bottom, and ever more uniformity within families as far as inherited abilities are concerned.[38]

William Shockley is a Nobel prize winning physicist and a professor of engineering science at Stanford University, but his concern for the future of American society has led him to establish a new reputation as a promoter of the study of dysgenics.[39] He is not interested in establishing the heritability of I.Q.—that is his premise—but he is enraged by the apparent conspiracy of silence which prevents the intellectual community

from examining its implications. Shockley does not restrict himself to analysis, but moves on to propose new public policy. Rather than continue welfare programs which support the least intelligent groups in society and encourage them to reproduce, Shockley prescribes "humane eugenic measures" and proposes a bonus for voluntary sterilization. He describes how much a program would "benefit" society:

> . . . At a bonus rate of $1,000 for each point below 100 I.Q., $30,000 put in trust for a 70 I.Q. moron potentially capable of producing 20 children might return $250,000 to taxpayers in reduced costs of mental retardation care.[40]

Shockley believes that it would be a simple matter to determine the candidates for this "voluntary" sterilization, for

> . . . Nature has color-coded groups of individuals so that statistically reliable predictions of their adaptability to intellectually rewarding and effective lives can easily be made and profitably be used by the pragmatic man in the street.[41]

If we do not follow his suggestions, Shockley warns, the blacks will suffer the most.

> If, as many thinking citizens fear, our welfare programs are unwittingly, but with the noblest of intentions, selectively dysgenic-breeding the poor of our slums by encouraging their least foresighted to be most prolific, the consequences will be tragic for both blacks and whites—but proportionately so much worse for our black minority that, as I have said, the consequence may be a form of genetic enslavement that will provoke extremes of racism with agony for all citizens.[42]

A final example of the psychological attack on equality is found in H. J. Eysenck's *Race, Intelligence and Education*. Eysenck is not willing, as are some of his colleagues, to conclude that genetic factors are the sole, or even the major, determinants of I.Q., but he feels that large-scale studies of the problem ought to be undertaken. If we do not ascertain the actual facts of the matter, he warns, we will always run the risk of planning programs which are not only doomed to fail but which have adverse side effects as well: "The policy of enlightenment," Eysenck suggests,

> raises hopes which may be impossible to fulfill, and disappointment may produce (and has already produced) a feeling among Negroes that all whites are the enemy, and that liberals are but false friends. A realistic policy needs not only compassion, but also knowledge; it is in the marriage of these two that our best hope for a genuine solution must lie.
>
> . . . Even those who disagree with my tentative conclusions will be able to agree with me in this; only by proper research will the thesis of (partial) genetic determination of low Negro IQ be defeated. Until then, those concerned with public policy as well as those more interested in academic questions had better

> consider the genetic hypothesis as an alternative to the exclusively environmental hypothesis which has dominated our thoughts for far too long, and which has failed time and time again to produce the results, both political and research, which alone can support it.[11]

Widespread publicity has been given to the old/new theories of scholars like Jensen and Herrnstein, but little to the serious and equally scholarly rebuttals. Leon Kamin of Princeton, addressing the Southern Regional Council in 1973, stated unequivocally that "there is no demonstration of inheritability of intelligence test scores. . . . The burden of proof ought to be on those who claim that intelligence is inherited. So far they have failed miserably."[12] And yet public officials and the news media continue to convey the notion that genetic inferiority is now scientifically demonstrated. Such "demonstrations" depend on unreliable or irrelevant research such as the much-criticized Coleman report, for instance, or small-scale studies of twins brought up in different environments. They also contain conceptual, methodological and analytical errors, such as confusing socio-economic class with caste when comparing whites and blacks, or relying on group data in which individual characteristics become submerged.

But perhaps the most misleading impression of all is that compensatory education has been tried and has failed. Even without reference to the documented accounts of the ways in which Title I funds were misdirected and badly used,[13] the public might well stop to wonder how a few years of compensatory education were supposed to make up for generations of poverty, poor schooling and second-class citizenship. And it might also question how much improvement in learning opportunities could be expected from the mere act of giving some additional funds to educators who had failed for years to teach their students even the basic skills.

Some very interesting evidence of the social—as opposed to the genetic—origins of inferiority was reported by *Time* magazine early in 1973.[14] There exists in Japan today a group of some 3,000,000 people, the *buraku-min*, who look exactly like other Japanese but who are outcasts, strictly segregated and systematically oppressed by the majority society. Why? Because in the 16th century their ancestors engaged in occupations (slaughtering and skinning animals to produce leather) which the dominant religious groups considered unclean and defiling. Today, although the caste system was outlawed 100 years ago, members of this group display the classic characteristics of an "inferior" group: they are not as well-education; their *children's* average I.Q. is 16 points below the national Japanese average ("Remarkably similar," the reporter notes, "to the average 15-point difference between United States blacks and whites"); twice as many *buraku-min* are on relief as are other Japanese; juvenile delinquency is much higher among them. The ugly cycle repeats itself once again: society rejects a group of people, then points to the behaviors evoked by that rejection as confirmation of the thesis that they had all along been "inferior."

The evidence from even a cursory examination of history clearly indicates that schemes of racial classification and theories of genetic inferiority

of some races provide a convenient rationale for feelings of fear and resentment and ultimately for the oppression of certain groups. Ashley Montagu identifies the connection between nineteenth century interest in "inferior races" and the need to *legitimate* the slave trade:

> . . . What is of the greatest interest and importance for an understanding of this matter is that the concept developed as a direct result of the trade in slaves by European merchants. It is of even greater interest and importance to note that as long as the trade was taken for granted and no one raised a voice against it, or at least a voice that was heard, the slaves, though treated as chattels, were nonetheless conceded to be human in every sense but that of social status. . . . It was only when voices began to make themselves heard against the inhuman traffic in slaves, and when these voices assumed the shape of influential men and organizations, that, on the defensive, the supporters of slavery were forced to look about them for reasons of a new kind to controvert the dangerous arguments of their opponents.[47]

As Montagu has noted, one cannot be too careful in examining the values underlying the scientists' selection of hypotheses and data. Noam Chomsky has, perhaps, summarized most accurately and pointedly the true nature of the debate on genetic inferiority.

> In fact, it seems that the question of the relation, if any, between race and intelligence has little scientific importance (as it has no social importance, except under the assumptions of a racist society). A possible correlation between mean I.Q. and skin color is of no greater scientific interest than a correlation between any two other arbitrarily selected traits, say, mean height and color of eyes. . . .
>
> We do not insist on assigning each adult to the category 'below six feet in height' or 'above six feet in height' when we ask what sort of education he should receive or where he should live or what he should do. Rather he is what he is, quite independent of the mean I.Q. of people of his height category. In a non-racist society the category of race would be of no greater significance.[48]

It should be noted also that theories of racial inferiority have been used in connection with many groups—Chinese "coolies," Irish immigrants, or our "little brown brothers."[49] Such theories and data from "experts" in the field provided the rationale for the "Haves" to pity, patronize or bestow benevolence upon the "Have-nots." But at the same time such theories made it easy for people to avoid confronting and altering the conditions which caused the difficulties of the poor and oppressed. With such a rationale, it was also easy to deny full participation in the economic and political affairs of the Republic. This was the attitude which dominated the South until Federal civil rights legislation in the 1960's removed the barriers to black registration and voting.

So today, those theorists—Jensen and Herrnstein, among others—who profess to have discovered that some groups are bound by unbreakable

chains to their inheritance, soon find themselves, whether they had planned to do so or not, the champions of tracking, limiting horizons, fitting education to the "talents" of the student—and all the other devices used by a society which seems determined to see that some, but not all, of its citizens have an equal opportunity to succeed and participate fully in American life.

SECOND THEME: THE IMPROVIDENCE OR SLOTH OF THE POOR

For hundreds of years, poverty was considered normal and inevitable. Most men were poor, and they were dependent for the relief of dire suffering on the charity of the few who were wealthy. Not until the sixteenth century were unemployment and destitution considered matters for attention by the state, and in 1601 England's "Old Poor Law" established such measures as compulsory apprenticeship of the young, badges denoting "pauper," and workhouses. From the outset, distinctions were made between the "deserving" poor (those who could not work because they were disabled or ill) and the thriftless poor. An Edinburgh cleric, the Reverend John McFarlan, was an early exponent of such classifications—were he alive today, he would no doubt be nominated as a Presidential advisor. In his *Inquiries Concerning the Poor* (1782), he wrote that:

> In tracing the causes of poverty, I have endeavored to show that the greatest number of those who are now the objects of charity are either such as have reduced themselves to this situation by sloth or vice, or such as, by a very moderate degree of industry and frugality, might have prevented indigence.[50]

The coming of the Industrial Revolution greatly accentuated the differences between the rich and the poor. The rapid change from centuries-old economic stagnation to suddenly increasing wealth created by factories, railroads and other miracles of the modern era gave birth to economics—the "dismal science," as Carlyle termed it. John Kenneth Galbraith attributes to Adam Smith, one of the first economists, "the beginnings of perhaps the most influential and certainly the most despairing dictum in the history of social comment, the notion that the income of the masses of people could not for very long rise very far above the minimum level necessary for the survival of the race . . . the immortal iron law." [51] And adds Galbraith:

> with Ricardo and Malthus the notion of massive privation and great inequality became a basic premise . . . Since most men had always been poor, it is hardly surprising that Malthus was on the whole unperturbed by his conclusions and that he did not feel called upon to propose any remedy . . . For Ricardo the system survived not because it served the ordinary man. Obviously it did not. It survived only because there was no evident alternative and certainly none that was better. Any effort to modify it made it less efficient.[52]

The inequities of the industrial system vastly increased the burden of poor law expenditures, and Parliament was finally persuaded to pass the "New Poor Law" in 1834, based on the recommendations of a royal commission which had stated that "every penny bestowed that tends to render the condition of the pauper more eligible than that of the independent labourer is a bounty on indolence and vice." [53] In 1973, the same

view of the poor is clearly evidenced in policies which promote "workfare, not welfare" and "help-up, not hand-out."

The English attitude and legal precedents had, of course, been carried to the New World by the colonists, and became woven into the American fabric as well. The view that some people were naturally predisposed to laziness and, lacking the virtues of pride and self-respect, required the threat of punishment as an incentive to work, was seized upon as a telling argument in favor of Southern slavery. In 1862, Senator Garrett Davis of Kentucky, announced to his colleagues:

> A negro's idea of freedom is freedom from work, as a general rule . . . (S)laves previous to their liberation were industrious, were orderly, were well-behaved . . . (A)fter they were liberated and acquired their freedom, they became lazy, indolent, thievish vagabonds . . . a thriftless worthless indolent inefficient population . . . (They) will become a sore and a burden and a charge upon the white population. They will be criminals; they will become paupers; they will become a charge and a pest upon this society.[54]

As noted earlier, similar strictures were delivered against the immigrants who had been attracted to America, but who were, it was said, unable or unwilling to carry their share of the load, as evidenced by the large proportion who applied for public assistance. A new hero was introduced: the "Forgotten Man"—the thrifty and industrious person who had achieved his position by dint of innate superiority and hard work, but who now saw his richly deserved security threatened by the outrageous demands of egalitarians, abolitionists and other do-gooders. In a similar, but later period, the Forgotten Man became the "Silent Majority."

The source and center of American attitudes toward the poor, however, were to be found in Social Darwinism, a movement which quickly came to dominate the nineteenth century American intellectual landscape. Its key phrases—"struggle for existence," "natural selection," and "survival of the fittest"—were well suited to be the foundation of an argument for competition, laissez-faire economics, and acceptance of certain social evils as a necessary price for general (and inevitable) progress via evolution.

William Graham Sumner, professor of political and social science at Yale, was the leading proponent of the notion that poverty was an inevitable part of the struggle for existence and that it could best be remediated, not by social planning or revolutionary upheaval, but by individual sobriety, industry, virtue and prudence.

> 'The strong' and 'the weak' are terms which admit of no definition unless they are made equivalent to the industrious and the idle, the frugal and the extravagent.
>
> If we do not like survival of the fittest we have only one possible alternative, and that is survival of the unfittest . . . We have our choice between the two, or we can go on, as in the past, vacillating between the two, but a third plan—the socialist

> desideratum—a plan for nourishing the unfittest and yet advancing in civilization, no man will ever find.[55]

To Sumner and his followers, the whole sweep of history gave convincing evidence that natural rights and the equality of all men were simply figments of the idealist imagination.

> Democracy itself, the pet superstition of the age, is only a phrase . . .[56]

> The eighteenth-century notions about equality, natural rights, classes and the like produced nineteenth-century states and legislation, all strongly humanitarian in faith and temper; at the present time the eighteenth-century notions are disappearing, and the *mores* of the twentieth century will not be tinged by humanitarianism as those of the last hundred years have been.[57]

To base governmental policy on such transient ideas was at best sentimental foolishness; at worst, it could and would lead to illusory hopes, endless agitation and dangerous social disorder.

The rise of Social Darwinism coincided with the establishment of the great American fortunes: Vanderbilt, Gould, Harriman, Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Stanford were members of the new "aristocracy of wealth."[58] "For the very first time in history," comments Robert Heilborner:

> the rich man was viewed not merely as the successful contestant in the struggle for wordly goods but as the rightful inheritor of that mantle of prestige and esteem which had previously rested on many shoulders, but never on his . . . As once the king, warrior, nobleman, or priest, so now the businessman was given the attribute of inherent superiority, and the business mind that of infallibility.[59]

Modern approaches to poverty

The Great Depression of the 1930's shattered most assumptions about the causes and treatment of poverty, and caused sweeping changes in policies toward the poor. For the first time in American history, millions of people were unemployed and poor—obviously through no fault of their own. The New Deal attempted to deal directly with both the causes and the effects of economic disaster without any thought of assigning blame to the "inherent improvidence" or "natural indolence" of those in acute distress. But once the economy had recovered it was easy for most Americans to adopt once again their traditional belief in individual effort. The continuing poverty of many citizens was documented by Michael Harrington in his account of *The Other America*,[60] and in the early 1960's the Federal government set out to "eradicate poverty" altogether, first through the New Frontier ("a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war"), and, later, an "unconditional war on poverty."

It did not take long for disillusionment at the apparent failure to

win the "war," and resentment at the dislocations and expense it had caused, to surface in such epithets as the "welfare swindle" and "deadbeats." Scholars, too, began to re-examine poverty and discover new reasons for its existence: "deep-seated structual distortions in the life of the Negro American;" a "culture of poverty;" or "an outlook and style of life which is radically present-oriented and which therefore attaches no value to work, sacrifice, self-improvement, or service." Scholars, who might otherwise have lived and worked unknown outside the narrow confines of their specialized areas of research, earned a national reputation for their work in analyzing poverty and indicating what, if anything, could be done about the poor by a society which was embarrassingly rich.

Oscar Lewis, for instance, is a sociologist/anthropologist whose particular field is not the United States at all, but rather Mexico. His careful studies of Mexican peasant families led him to propose the theory of a "culture of poverty," a self-perpetuating set of values and attitudes which prevents one generation after another from taking advantage of new opportunities and thus escaping from their miserable existence—and which even encourages them to adapt to and accept their lot in life.[61] The phrase "culture of poverty" has been adopted by numerous others, as a convenient way of explaining why, in American society which has long prided itself on not only allowing but encouraging progress from rags to riches, some groups have failed to achieve social and economic success.

Daniel Moynihan's *The Negro Family* is an excellent example of a government position paper written from this point of view. Although he clearly acknowledges and deprecates the tragedy of slavery—"indescribably worse than any recorded servitude, ancient or modern"—he goes on to suggest that the modern problems facing blacks as a group result, not from continuing institutionalized oppression, but from the "tangle of pathology" which characterizes the Negro family. "It will be found," he states, "to be the principal source of most of the aberrant, inadequate, or anti-social behavior that did not establish, but now serves to perpetuate the cycle of poverty and deprivation."[62] National action, then, must be directed (although he does not say how) toward strengthening the Negro family structure, now characterized by broken marriages, illegitimate birth, households headed by females, and dependency on welfare. Slums, delinquency, educational failure, unemployment, alienation and drug addiction—all classic symptoms of poverty—have their roots, according to Moynihan, in the abdication of responsibility by the Negro male and the consequent development of a matriarchal system. When the National Urban League, however, reviewed the data on black families, it suggested that, since "The great majorities of black families . . . are *not* characterized by criminality delinquency, drug addiction or desertion . . . examining the *strengths* of black families can contribute as much toward understanding and ameliorating some social problems as examining their weaknesses."[63] (Emphasis added) In direct contradiction to the Moynihan report, and similar "culture of poverty" studies, the National Urban League researchers found that the data showed black families to be characterized by strong kinship bonds, strong work orientation, adaptabil-

ity of family roles, strong achievement orientation, and strong religious orientation.

Edward C. Banfield, a political scientist, is still another scholar who proposes the "culture of poverty" as a significant framework for viewing the problems of the poor.

> Extreme present-orientedness, not lack of income or wealth, is the principal cause of poverty . . . Most of those caught up in this culture are unable or unwilling to plan for the future, to sacrifice immediate gratifications in favor of future ones, or to accept the disciplines that are required in order to get and to spend . . . Improvements in external circumstances can affect this poverty only superficially: one problem of a 'multiproblem' family is no sooner solved than another arises . . . Raising such a family's income would not necessarily improve its way of life, moreover, and could conceivably even make things worse.[64]

Deftly destroying much of the power of Banfield's argument, Barbara Sizemore points out that it does not apply to blacks, "because lower-class black culture is future oriented. If one is good on earth and adheres to the rule of God, one will surely go to glory! If this is not a manifestation of the postponement of gratification, what is?" [65]

By the late 1960's, meantime, Moynihan had apparently moved away from his preoccupation with the "pathology" of the black family. After analyzing the various war-on-poverty programs, he concluded that they were at fault—not because they had failed to deliver the services promised, but because they had encouraged the poor to hope for more than they could get.

> The most conspicuous effect has been a near-obsessive concern to locate the 'blame' for poverty, especially Negro poverty, on forces and institutions outside the community concerned. At different times, different factors have been in fashion—capitalism, racism, the military-industrial complex, etc.—but the tendency persists . . . (T)he apparent function of many of these programs as they actually came into being was to raise the level of perceived and validated discontent among poor persons with the social system about them without actually improving the conditions of life of the poor in anything like a comparable degree. Can it be that this process has not somehow contributed to and validated the onset of urban violence? [66]

Other scholars on the contemporary scene have, however, examined the "explanations" proffered by Moynihan, Banfield and their colleagues, and have found that the facts point to quite different and more plausible interpretations of both poverty and the recent "war on poverty." Charles Valentine and William Ryan are among those who have demonstrated that such concepts as the "culture of poverty" emerge from and reinforce the old stereotypes about the causes of poverty. Valentine, an anthropologist, is incensed at the casual subsuming of the behaviors and attitudes of the poor under the term "culture." He points out that:

> within this catalog of traits are quite a number that fit into this definition with difficulty, if at all. Many of these features seem more like externally imposed conditions or unavoidable matters of situational expediency, rather than cultural creations internal to the sub-society in question.[67]

In a *Harvard Education Review* article, Valentine recommends that two popular models, which tend to dominate the thinking of both sociologists and policy planners, be discarded. One is the Deficit Model, which postulates that some groups have serious biological or cultural inadequacies. The other is the Different Model, which suggests that minority groups have their own homogeneous but separate sub-culture. Instead, he proposes a Bi-culturation Model, based on the clear evidence that:

> each Afro-American ethnic segment draws upon both a distinctive repertoire of standardized Afro-American group behavior and, simultaneously, patterns derived from the mainstream cultural system of Euro-American derivation. Socialization into both systems begins at an early age, continues throughout life, and is generally of equal importance in most individual lives.[68]

This model is preferable, he believes, not only because it "more adequately represents Afro-American realities," but because it is "more congruent with desirable changes in the practice of service institutions operating in black ghettos."[69]

Relief arrangements are ancillary to economic arrangements. humanitarians who are sincerely concerned about social problems and would never engage in overt racism or reactionary tactics. But, says Ryan, finding the explanation for poverty in environmental circumstances turns out to be not very different from labeling the poor as genetically deficient or morally wicked. "The new ideology," he says,

> attributes defect and inadequacy to the malignant nature of poverty, injustice, slum life, and racial difficulties. The stigma that marks the victim and accounts for his victimization is an acquired stigma . . . But the stigma, the defect, the fatal difference—though derived in the past from environmental forces—is still located *within* the victim, inside his skin.[70]

Ryan goes on to demonstrate how this ideology—which diverts attention from social and institutional inadequacies and focuses instead on the "victim's" defects, inabilities, and deprivations—has helped to shape public thinking and policies in a wide variety of areas such as education, welfare, health care, urban renewal and justice.

> In each case, of course, we are persuaded to ignore the obvious: the continued blatant discrimination against the Negro, the gross deprivation of contraceptive and adoption services to the poor, the heavy stresses endemic in the life of the poor. And almost all our make-believe liberal programs aimed at correcting our urban problems are off target: they are designed either to change the poor man or to cool him out.[71]

Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, professors at the Columbia University School of Social Work, agree that much of the literature on welfare is based on a mistaken assumption—i.e., that relief programs are shaped by morality. In their view,

> Relief arrangements are ancillary to economic arrangements. Their chief function is to regulate labor, and they do that in two general ways. First, when mass unemployment leads to outbreaks of turmoil, relief programs are ordinarily initiated or expanded to absorb and control enough of the unemployed to restore order; then, as turbulence subsides, the relief system contracts, expelling those who are needed to populate the labor market.[72]

Piven and Cloward use this analysis of the function of relief to examine the extraordinary and sudden rise of the welfare rolls in the mid-sixties. The usual explanations attribute the increase to the continued migration of the black poor from the South, the improved benefits available, and the deteriorating condition of black families. But these theories are all "based on the extremely doubtful premise that the relief rolls automatically grow when the pool of people eligible for relief grows."[73] What really needs to be explained is "why so many of the families in that pool were finally able to get on the rolls," and that explanation can be found in the domestic turbulence of the period.

> The welfare explosion . . . was concurrent with the turmoil produced by the civil rights struggle, with widespread and destructive rioting in the cities, and with the formation of a militant grass-roots movement of the poor dedicated to the combatting of welfare restrictions. Not least, the welfare rise was also concurrent with the enactment of a series of ghetto-placating federal programs (such as the anti-poverty program) which, among other things, hired thousands of poor people, social workers, and lawyers who, it subsequently turned out, greatly stimulated people to apply for relief and helped them to obtain it.[74]

Piven and Cloward's theory that poverty relief programs are actually political and economic regulatory mechanisms, liberalized or restricted in direct proportion to the ebbing and waning of domestic disorder, is echoed by Sam Yette in his book, *The Choice: The Issue of Black Survival in America*. In Yette's view, the Federal efforts of the 1960's to reduce poverty constituted nothing more nor less than pacification—a convenient middle course between liberation, which the American majority was unwilling to undertake, and liquidation, which they could not sanction. He writes:

> The Great Society pacification programs, then, must be judged as failures, both in the honesty of their designs and in their truer aims of placating people justly aroused. In view of their maximum goals, the funds and personnel provided, and the authority to do the job, the OEO and civil rights program did not relinquish the original aims of white establishment exploitation,

> They left ultimate control and financial benefits with the colonialists—not with the colonized; nor even were control and profits shared equitably between them.[75]

Yette's book, the product of observations made during his own involvement in the government and years of experience as a newsman, describes, among other things, how attempts to implement the anti-poverty rhetoric were effectively check-mated by powerful opponents of change.[76]

Current arguments about welfare frequenty fail to take into account three important points. First, the massive subsidies which the government makes available to middle and upper class Americans through such devices as FHA loans, tax write-offs for mortgages, interest and capital gains, or tax-sheltered annuities contradict the myth that successful Americans have pulled themselves up by their own bootstraps. Such preferential treatment for the well-to-do confirms the old adage that "Them that has, gits," and constitutes what Philip Stern calls "The equivalent of direct welfare payments" for those rich enough to qualify and smart enough to employ good tax lawyers.[77] Secondly, despite the frequent accusations that welfare rolls are full of able-bodied but lazy individuals, the records show that almost all of those receiving public assistance are, in fact, unable to work.[78] Third, although we are not used to thinking of them in this way, welfare expenditures serve as stimulants to the entire economy in much the same way as do tax investment credits. As Carl Rowan pointed out in a column written during the last Presidential campaign, the ultimate recipients of welfare are, after all, grocery store owners, landlords and clothing store operators, and it would be hard to dispute the argument that welfare payments constitute, as Mr. Rowan put it, "a lifesaver to businessmen operating in and around neighborhoods of the poor." Donald M. Kendall, president of Pepsico, once told the Whittier, California, Chamber of Commerce that if 25 million Americans were lifted out of poverty, business would gain 25 million consumers, and said "If we wanted a better prop under our economy, we couldn't find one." Mr. Rowan comments:

> There was an honest businessman, admitting that the welfare system which gives little more than subsistence to millions of needy Americans is in truth a delightful prop to American business.[79]

People may argue—and frequently do—that poverty is a relative condition, that in America even the poor are far better off than any other group in the history of the world. But such statements somehow fail to satisfy those who cannot tolerate the sight of starving, sick, ill-clothed or wretchedly-housed individuals, when billions of dollars are being spent simply to dispose of the trash of an affluent society.

THIRD THEME: THE INABILITY OF GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS, PARTICULARLY EDUCATION, TO INTERVENE EFFECTIVELY IN INDIVIDUAL AFFAIRS

To what extent is the individual responsible for his own destiny? To what extent is the government responsible for regulating or establishing economic and social institutions to ensure that all individuals have the opportunity to succeed in attaining their goals? When individuals or groups are not successful (relative to others in the society), should the blame be attached to them or those institutions? The relationship of the individual to the state is the most profound and most difficult of all the problems proposed by political philosophy, and it is certainly incapable of solution—or even delineation—in these few brief pages. It is possible, however, to indicate some of the paradoxes in popular attitudes toward the role of government.

Perhaps the most startling contradiction is to be found in the nineteenth century American history: devout adherence to the theories of laissez-faire economics, while private fortunes were being established with Federal assistance and support. Using as their text the "laws" of the marketplace unveiled by Smith, Ricardo and Malthus, national leaders proclaimed that inequality of wealth was inevitable, and that to tamper with "the system" would ruin it for everyone, including the workingman. Indeed, the formation of large fortunes by a few was regarded as essential to the continued growth and expansion of capitalism, for only with great resources could men afford to take the risks necessary in new investment and invention. In the years following the Civil War, even the Supreme Court seemed captivated by the enthusiasm of uninhibited commercial expansion and the conquering of the West: as Professor Corwin noted, "it tended to view Congress' power under the 'commerce' clause . . . as primarily a power to foster, protect, and promote commerce," [80] rather than to regulate.

During this period, however, the financiers, entrepreneurs, and industrial magnates who subscribed wholeheatedly to the tenets of Adam Smith, and who regularly called for individual effort as the divinely appointed way to achieve material success, were more than capable of using governmental power to advance their own "individual" efforts. The Pacific Railway Act of 1862, for example, ceded to the four partners who had formed the Central Pacific Railway Company (Huntington, Hopkins, Stanford and Crocker) some 4,500,000 acres of public lands in the West—this in addition to a subsidy of $24 million of Federal funds. Another parcel of land of the same size was subsequently deeded to this company—at a time when, as Robert Heilbroner ironically notes, the Federal government was busy *selling* land to small homesteaders. The railroad builders, not content with Federal assistance, threatened to by-pass small communities along the right-of-way until they donated cash and property, and persuaded the San Francisco city fathers to give them $1 million. The California state government was also among the donors to their enterprise.[81]

Since the advent of Federal regulation of business (much of which was necessitated, of course, by its collapse in 1929), entrepreneurial practices

have not been so flamboyant as those of a century ago. But there are still strange inconsistencies about a businessman who publicly avows adherence to competition, individualism and free trade, while privately exerting every effort to secure government subsidies, to fix prices, and generally to reduce the very risks he supposedly embraces. Such massive government assistance programs as the oil depletion allowance or airline subsidies or the granting of monopoly rights to utility companies—all these are justified, like the railroad acts of years before, on the grounds of pressing public interest. Similarly, tax write-offs which benefit individuals, such as donations to cultural or charitable institutions, are allowed because such gifts also benefit the public. But (although much has been accomplished through social programs) increased public support for the aged, the poor or the ill is still frequently denounced as antithetical to American faith in free enterprise.

Particularly curious are the contradictory stances which have been taken regarding the schools. In the main, education has been recognized as a public responsibility—an essential component of a democratic society, and the chief means (along with virtue) whereby even the poor could hope to rise to eminence and wealth. From colonial and pioneer days, from the establishment of universal public education at elementary and secondary levels to the founding of private or public institutions of higher education (particularly the land-grant colleges), Americans have paid glowing tribute to the power of education. Over and over the same themes appeared: only through education for all Americans could the wilderness be tamed, the republic be governed well, economic progress be ensured, and the heterogeneous citizenry be unified. And as America steadily expanded in size, in population and in wealth, its progress was taken as visible evidence of the success of the schools and a justification of their cost.[82]

But from time to time education has suddenly been found to have limitations on what it could accomplish. Perhaps, after all, there were some individuals or groups who were simply incapable of profiting from education. During Reconstruction, for example, many voices were raised to protest the establishment of common schools for the newly-freed slaves or, at least, to suggest that their curriculum be strictly limited to "practical" subjects. Daniel H. Chamberlain, a Yankee who served as the Republican attorney general and later governor of South Carolina during Reconstruction, lived to have second thoughts about the wisdom of some Radical Republican and abolitionist policies, especially those advocating extensive education for freedom. In an article for the 1901 *Atlantic Monthly*, he wrote this:

> (The negro) does not need . . . higher education . . . (A) great amount of money and effort has been worse than wasted on such education, or attempts at such education, of the negro. To an appreciable extent, it has been a positive evil to him. Give him, or rather stimulate him to provide for himself, education suited to his condition: to wit, abundant training in the three R's; and after that, skill in handicraft, in simple manual labor of all kinds, which it is his lot to do—lot fixed not by us, but by powers

above us . . . (L)et the negro be taught . . . thrift, pecuniary prudence and foresight . . .[53]

The arrival, around the turn of the century, of thousands upon thousands of poor immigrants created new challenges for public education. Once again, the schools were looked to as the institutions which could indoctrinate the newcomers in the American language and traditions and start them up the ladder of success. Colin Greer, in *The Great School Legend*, describes how the almost mystical faith in the schools as the "melting pot" of American society gradually hardened into a conviction that they were in fact responsible for "solving" the immigrant problem. When, occasionally, evidence came to light that not all immigrants *had* moved successfully into the mainstream, it was impossible to believe that the schools had failed.[54] Greer explains:

> Since, as it appeared, the schools were capable of creating mobility for some of the poor, for those who seemed 'willing to take advantage of the opportunities offered them,' then it seemed to follow that there was something inherently wrong with those ethnic groups which were not succeeding in school or afterward. Clearly, the fault was not to be placed with the schools. Increasingly, ethnic, genetic, and racial hypotheses were advanced to explain away the failure of some of the poor. The first victims of these theories were the Irish and the Italians; then, when poor blacks displaced poor immigrants as the majority of the urban school population, they inherited the honor of being the unteachable element in what would otherwise be an efficient and successful school system.[55]

The 1960's, however, saw widespread renewal of the old faith in education as the crucial means for making the nation great. The decade's extraordinary efforts to improve American schools were sparked in part by the shock of Russian success in space science, in part by the implications of the 1954 *Brown* decision that "separate facilities are inherently unequal." The nation was forced to re-examine its school systems and repair their weaknesses, both as a matter of self-defense and in order to comply with the Constitution. Long-standing opposition to Federal involvement in education (which had always been regarded, legally and emotionally, as a local or state concern) crumbled, as Congress passed measures designed to aid the nation's schools. One innovation after another was launched with new assertions of the achievements which would be made, for all and by all, now that the schools had both adequate funding and unlimited freedom to experiment with new curricula and methods.

But the hoped-for progress was not made, certainly not on the scale once imagined. Despite the ferment, reform efforts and Federal funds, school systems, particularly in the urban areas which had been a special target for new programs, were just about the same. Inevitably, disillusionment and anger—that so much effort and expense had achieved so little—set in; just as inevitably, voices were soon repeating the old refrains: "You

expected too much of the schools, and anyway some people are just ineducable." What had been said at earlier junctures was being said again: if the schools cannot successfully transform the urban poor into productive workers (or slaves into dependent citizens, or immigrants into "good Americans"), the explanation is to be found, not in the schools, but in those groups' basic (and probably innate) deficiencies.

Jencks on Inequality

By far the best-publicized recent attack on unlimited faith in education, even "reformed" education, is that made by Christopher Jencks. "None of the evidence we have reviewed," writes Jencks, "suggests that school reform can be expected to bring about significant social changes outside the schools. More specifically, the evidence suggests that equalizing educational opportunity would do very little to make adults more equal."[86]

The findings of Jencks and his associates were published in late 1972 as *Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America*. The book, carrying with it the prestige of Harvard-M.I.T. (where the book was developed and written) and of the Carnegie and Guggenheim foundations (which largely funded the research and writing), has been readily adopted by those who are looking for reasons to tear down or abandon altogether the Great Society's emphasis on securing equality of opportunity through improving the schools. Jencks himself (who is very much in favor of reducing inequality) was not only aware of, but irritated by, the unseemly speed with which his work was being picked up by opponents of educational change or improvement, as he indicated shortly after *Inequality* appeared:

> Some people are now using our conclusions to justify limiting educational expenditures and abandoning efforts at desegregation . . . Politicians and school boards . . . have seized on our research to justify what they want to do anyway . . . (I)t does not follow that we should sweep the problems under the rug, or use the fig leaf of social science to claim that they are not important.[87]

The fact remains, however, that the intent of his book is clearly (as its jacket indicates) to "challenge much of contemporary social policy" and to demonstrate (among other things) that "school quality has little effect on achievement or economic success." What could be more logical than to conclude that institutions which are so obviously not doing what they were thought to be doing are hardly worth the enormous amounts of time, money and energy which have been expended in their behalf? What else could be made of such statements as these?

> —Economic success seems to depend on varieties of luck and on-the-job competence that are only moderately related to family background, schooling or scores on standardized tests.[88]
>
> —Adequate school funding cannot, then be justified on the grounds that it makes life better in the hereafter.[89]

—Thus, we cannot expect universal preschooling to narrow the gap between rich and poor or between whites and blacks . . .[90]

—No measurable school resource or policy shows a consistent relationship to schools' effectiveness in boosting student achievement . . . (and) the gains associated with any given resource are almost always small.[91]

—Qualitative differences between high schools seem to explain about two percent of the variation in students' educational attainment.[92]

—The evidence we have reviewed suggests, however, that the long-term effects of segregation on individual students are quite small.[93]

—Our research suggests that the character of a school's output depends largely on a single input, namely the characteristics of the entering children. Everything else—the school budget, its policies, the characteristics of the teachers—is either secondary or completely irrelevant.[94]

Whether Jencks intended them to or not, such statements clearly imply that improving schools is a waste of time since education has little effect on later achievement. But a further inference can be drawn from his conclusions: if the "characteristics of the entering children" are indeed almost the sole factor in determining educational success (school "output"), obviously educational failure can be explained by deficiencies in the children themselves, rather than in the school. Again what could be more logical than to accept theories, conveniently provided by other scholars, that as a class the poor are unable to "defer gratification" long enough to take advantage of education opportunity, or as a race, blacks are so "genetically inferior" that they will never equal whites in educational achievement.

It is not the purpose of this paper to refute Jencks' findings point by point. That is being done systematically and well by many others, who point, for instance, to his use of poor data and faulty statistical models and techniques.[95] Henry Levin, noted Stanford economist, summarizes his critique of Jencks' book by saying:

> The omission of important variables because of 'ignorance of their effects,' the casual ordering of the variables, assumptions of linear relationships and normal distributions, the scavenging and use of data collected for other purposes and the questionable treatment of their measurement errors, means that the actual findings and interpretations are at least as much a product of value perspectives and opinions of the researcher as they are of this methodology and data.[96]

Another line of attack on Jenck's work comes from those who recognize that his chief concern is not so much equality of opportunity as equality of results. What Jencks is really after is to persuade society, as he puts it, to "get on with the task of equalizing income rather than waiting for the day when everyone's learning power is equal.[97] Bayard

Rustin, while agreeing with Jencks that Americans expect too much of their schools, denounces his stated goal as "at once utopian and defeatist."

> To accede to such an 'all-or-nothing' view would be to acknowledge that the principles and goals of the civil rights movement have generated so much wasted motion. And yet the evidence is clear and quantifiable that blacks have made quite substantial progress in education . . . (S)uch gains cannot be written off as chance. Nor is this progress irrelevant, despite what the counterculturists tell us . . . We are living in a credentials-oriented society which exacts harsh penalties from the under-educated.[98]

Richard Graham, former Teacher Corps director, indicates that the relationship between schooling and later income may not be as direct as had been assumed, but he points out that this may be a temporary phenomenon, due in part to the time-lag between changes in the world and changes in schooling. In the future, he says, we may see "schools so different from those of the recent past as to make the Jencks conclusions of only passing interest."[99] Graham's comments to the contrary notwithstanding, it is obvious that to reach the higher echelons of business or any of the professions, one must successfully pass through several successive stages of schooling. Implicit in such phrases as "the credential society" and many others is popular acknowledgement that schooling and income are, in fact, intimately related.

Charles Asbury of Howard University is particularly angered by the suggestion that schools do not make a difference,[100] and cites Dentler and Warshauer's study *Big City Dropouts and Illiterates* as evidence of the direct correlation between schooling, jobs and income. Even more forcefully, he argues that the all-too-frequent instances of school failure can be explained by the faulty theory and implementation of many of the compensatory education programs. Public education, he states, "has never really been given an opportunity to work." It is ridiculous to pretend that it has had adequate funding or public support, and equally silly to have thought that deep-seated school and social problems could be "fixed by a hastily conceived series of 'crash programs' tried in the 1960's. Moreover, there have been well-documented violations of the law, both by misapplication of funds and deliberate frustration of desegregation efforts.[102] "And now," he adds, "along comes Jencks to point to the lack of progress as evidence of the failure of the programs."

Meantime, relatively little publicity has been given to some "facts" (and their implications for education) very different from those proposed by Jencks and his colleagues. At the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science late in 1972, Jerome Kagan, a Harvard psychologist, reported on his study of child-rearing practices in a primitive Guatemalan village. Children in that village are isolated for the first year of their lives and, predictably, emerge severely retarded. But by the time they reach the age of eleven, they equal middle-class American children in scores on tests of intelligence. Kagan concluded that "Infant retardation is reversible, and cognitive development in the early

years is plastic,"—and that the role of the schools, therefore, is extremely significant.[103] "An abnormal experience in the first two years of life in no way affects basic intellectual functions or the ability to be affectively normal," said Kagan in an interview published in *Saturday Review of Education*. "I think my work suggests," he added, that "we've got to stop the very early, and I think, premature rank-ordering of children in grades one, two, and three."[104] It will be interesting to see whether voices like Kagan's will be heard, when the furor over Jencks subsides, and—hopefully—public attention is focused once again on what schools *can* do, rather than what they cannot.

The question, when all is said and done, is not *whether* government can effectively intervene or *whether* schools make a difference. The evidence of history, unbiased observation and common sense is very clear: it is all a matter of expectations—and the power to see that expectations are met. Thus, when teachers are "expected" to teach, and children to learn, by and large they do. When a President "expects" NASA to put a man on the moon, it does. And yet despite the most amazing demonstrations of human ingenuity and inventiveness, it is still possible for some people to wring their hands and bemoan the intractability of certain problems. William Ryan put it well when he stated:

> The primary cause of social problems is powerlessness. The cure for powerlessness is power. The criteria for effective programs to solve America's problems of race and poverty are, in fact very simple (even though the execution of such programs would be enormously difficult and complex). They are known to most ghetto dwellers, educated or not; known perhaps most keenly to those who have never held a high school diploma in their hands. Power must be redistributed: that redistribution will then permit the redistribution of income.[105]

The power of the government rests, according to the tenets of American democracy, on the consent of the governed. But governmental power today, warns economist John Kenneth Galbraith, has been captured by the corporations. "Perhaps our greatest question," he says, is whether emancipation of the state from the control of the planning system (i.e., the corporations) is possible.

> On all the matters I have mentioned—the restrictions on excessive resource use, organization to offset inadequate resource use, action to correct systematic inequality, protection of the environment, protection of the consumer—remedial action lies with the state. The fox is powerful in the management of the coop. To this management the chickens must look for redress.[106]

CONCLUSION

The various arguments which have been advanced in recent years to demonstrate that social problems are the result of innate inferiority or membership in an abnormal culture have all been used to condone a policy of "benign neglect." If one believes that society as a whole has played little or no part in determining the plight of the less fortunate, the society is justified in declining responsibility for seeing to its amelioraiton. While few scholars who hold this view would condone a deliberate decision to leave the poor, the handicapped or the incompetent to their fate, it appears that their counsel is one of delay, further study, and limiting of policy decisions to what is clearly possible rather than what is dictated by the need.

It must be re-emphasized that there is no intent on the part of the writer to imply that the individual scholars which have been mentioned subscribe to the position of any or all of the others. Indeed, in some instances at least, there would be considerable argument with the proposition that they are, in fact, attacking the American ideal of equality of opportunity. But when one reviews the separate strands of the current intellectual attack on equality, and begins to comprehend how well they fit together, it is surely justifiable to treat them as a group. Certainly their cumulative effect is to provide the rationale for policies—or the abandonment of policies—which have already been determined by national leaders, in response to the resentments, fear and anger of more successful Americans who feel they have already done enough for the less fortunate of society.

In this connection, it should also be pointed out that no implication of conscious venality or devious motives is ascribed to those scholars who hold or promote the views referred to in this paper. But it is also true that one must confront and grapple with the unanticipated as well as the anticipated consequences of these theories, and with the behaviors of those who hold and promote such theories. Whether the reaction to such conceptual formulations and theories was intended or not is, in this context, irrelevant. The implications for public policy are overriding in their importance.

What experience and history teach is this, said Hegel, that people and governments never have learned anything from history. But, added Santayana, those who refuse to learn from history are doomed to repeat it. It is surely not coincidental, then, that in this age of widespread distrust of or contempt for the past in general and for the study of historical precedent in particular, the United States seems inclined to see played out once more the ugly drama of retrenchment and reaction to an all-too-brief period of renewed hopes and limited gains in the long fight to realize the full implications of its national goals and ideals.

Just over one hundred years ago, this country was emerging from the chaos and confusion of an agonizing civil war. With the hostilities scarcely over, the lofty words of Lincoln's Second Inaugural seemed to sound a keynote for a period of reform and renewal: "With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the

right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds . . . to achieve . . . a just and lasting peace among ourselves." Yet within weeks an assassin's bullet had ended the life of Lincoln. While abolitionist forces fought on in an attempt to accomplish what he had begun, his skillful leadership was sorely missed, and finally his visionary goals were allowed to sink into oblivion by a nation caught up in the great era of commercial expansion. Generations of American school children were taught that Lincoln's actions had "solved" the problems of slavery, but they learned little of the tragic aftermath of reconstruction. It was hardly surprising that so many should have been so unprepared for the outpouring of protest against black oppression which came to a head during the 1960's.

It may not be appropriate to draw analogies between a civil war which convulsed the nation and impoverished an entire region, and the more limited disorder and violence which have accompanied the civil rights and poverty struggle. Yet once again, Americans have been arrayed against their fellow citizens. In 1970 as in 1870, some advances in the age old struggle for human dignity had been gained—although at the price of human lives, fractured relationships and increased public altercation. And in 1970 as in 1870, the apologists for regression and backlash were taking their places on the national stage ready to assure a confused and angry citizenry that its ideals were never meant, somehow, to be made a part of the stuff of daily life. Were these men merely self-serving politicians,—seeking to take advantage of emotional currents, however transitory, in order to gain temporary political advantage or reelection—one might well discount their bland assurances. But instead, they are scientists and social scientists—the high priests of this modern age—and, their words cloaked in the jargon and statistics of their respective specialities, they are being received as prophets by many who are tired of the battle and eager to find justification for the laying down of arms, for peace and quiet. They bear an uncanny resemblance to the false prophets of Jeremiah's time who cried "peace, peace," when there was no peace. But what is needed is someone to shout, like Patrick Henry, "Gentlemen may cry peace, but there is no peace. The war has actually begun."

What, then, is the endangered American ideal, which has too often been honored more in the breech than the observance, but to which this people has committed itself for almost two hundred years? Millions of words have been written and spoken to define it, expose it as unworkable, and even deny it. Yet throughout this nation's history, in time of exuberant expansion as well as in dark hours of danger and despair, there runs the bright thread of conviction that it is possible to create a truly just society, one that enthusiastically support individualism, but simultaneously and tenaciously places its public and private resources and commitments behind the ideal of equality among and between all men. A modern visionary has expressed it well: "I believe," said John Gardner,

> that when we are being most true to ourselves as Americans, we are seeking a society in which every young person has the opportunity to grow to full stature in every way, a society in which no

> one is irreparably damaged by circumstances that can be prevented. The release of human potential, enhancement of individual dignity, the liberation of the human spirit—those are the deepest and truest goals to be conceived by the hearts and minds of the American people. Such ideals cannot be said to be alive unless they live in the acts of men. We must build them into law and our institutions and our ways of dealing with one another . . . It is the great work of our generation . . . to make this a liveable society for every American.[107]

Behind this inspiring challenge, however, lies a crucial assumption: the essential equality of all men, the worth and dignity of each individual. That belief is the cornerstone of the American experiment, the American experience. And it is that belief which now, once more, is being openly debated. When all is said and done, there are only two basic patterns by which a nation may mold its laws, customs and institutions. One is the ancient notion of a natural hierarchy: some men, because of their strength, virtue, positions, wealth or whatever, are superior to others and have, therefore, the right to impose their will upon the inferior. The other concept—which Americans for two hundred years have dared to believe in and act on—is a belief in equality. And that belief in equality means that there is no "natural" scheme of things which ordains some men to rule and others to obey. Any man may be President, although most will not. We may have saints and sinners among us, the beautiful and the ugly, the rich and the poor—but no one group may claim special privilege, nor may any one group be condemned to eternal servitude.

It is the terrible contradiction between this ideal and the actual practice of American life which has almost continually fragmented, frustrated and infuriated the populace. Gunnar Myrdal, of course, called it the "American Dilemma"—that was in 1944. Almost thirty years later, the conflict is not over; the contradiction has not been resolved. Instead there is emerging a new assault on equality, an attack on the faith which has informed and sustained this nation throughout its history.

If the arguments which have been examined in this paper were no more than another round of scholarly debate, they would be of only passing and limited interest. But what makes them frightening is the fact that they are both symptoms and causes of events in the "real" world. Well before Lyndon Johnson, the architect of the Great Society, was laid to rest, the dismantling of his programs and abandoning of his policies had begun. When explanations for these actions are demanded, the answers—with more than a hint of condescension—are readily forthcoming: those programs were badly conceived and operated; they were characterized by mismanagement, waste and minimal results; they were based on faulty research.

There is ample evidence to demonstrate that government can and has successfully intervened in the affairs of men. The predominant white and affluent suburban rings surrounding the increasingly non-white and financially impoverished cities did not develop by accident. They were created in large measure by government support through such devices as FHA,

GI loans, water and sewer grants and highway subsidies. The development of high yield crops, the improvement of livestock, the extension of electrical power to rural areas were not accidents. The government supported and financed these developments in large part through TVA, land-grant colleges and universities, agricultural extension and experiment stations and a host of other programs. The development of industrial parks and the rebuilding of the business sections of central cities were supported in part by governmental intervention, financing and urban renewal programs. Many other illustrations are possible, but hardly necessary.

It is clear that, given the desire and commitment, this society *can* accomplish almost anything. During World War II, for example, literally millions of people—men, women, youth—were trained in incredibly brief periods of time to manufacture and operate the most complicated and ingenious equipment in the world. In a short period of time this country literally created an aircraft industry and a shipbuilding industry which met modern needs. They were created with massive governmental assistance. And, even more important, we educated and trained the people to operate and sustain these industries during and after the war. Later, when the decision was made to put a man on the moon within ten years the mathematics and science curricula were changed dramatically and we educated and trained literally thousands of engineers, scientists, technicians and other personnel. We created new knowledge and accomplished the task. In the process, hundreds of millions of dollars went up in smoke as rocket after rocket exploded, program after program failed, and conventional knowledge had to be discarded, updated or reexamined. The essential point is that the goal was perceived as important enough to justify the expanse of failure and bad decisions along the way to ultimate success. A reasonable person might ask: Why not demonstrate the same commitment to people, the poor and oppressed? No decision was made to throw out the entire space effort or the highway effort or the agricultural effort because there were individual failures in some programs or efforts. Why should such a decision even be considered when we are dealing with our most valuable asset: people?

Certainly no sane person would condone continuing extravagant programs which demonstrate little or no evidence of meeting their stated objectives. But what of those social programs which *did* work? Will serious research be devoted to identifying promising and successful efforts in civil rights, in education, or in the war on poverty; to analyzing programs with a view to strengthening their weaknesses; to exploring as yet untried ways of solving social problems? Or will the "new" research—on genetic inferiority, on the culture of poverty, and on the uselessness of governmental intervention—be adopted and used as an excuse and a justification for deserting programs and policies which, after all, were difficult and costly. G. K. Chesterton, responding to the assertion that Christianity had proved a failure, commented that the trouble was not that it had been tried and found wanting—but that it had been found difficult and never tried. One might well say the same of many of America's highly publicized crusades in recent years.

What is clearly at stake is a choice of national values. The data, the research, the programs are all secondary. Will Americans renew their commitment to individualism *and* equality of opportunity, regardless of how difficult it may be to work out that dual commitment? Will they reaffirm the ideals of fairness and compassion which are their greatest strength? Will they refuse to accept limitations on how much the human condition can be improved? These are the grave and complex questions facing the American people in the mid-1970's. The answers they make, the responses they choose, will have profound consequences not only for their children but for all mankind.

Kenneth Thompson, Vice President of the Rockefeller Foundation, was thinking of American support for foreign aid when he wrote the following words, but his comments are equally valid for domestic aid programs:

> Modern civilization, embarrassed by the pretentiousness of most moralistic rhetoric, has thrown off not only the excesses of moralism but the abiding truths of morality, and this may be the cause for the decline of support for . . . aid. The inescapable fact of life in every community, whether the family or the world, is that we need one another. Yet we don't understand one another; we hurt one another. Interdependency and dependency, which are both essential, are equally fraught with psychological perils. In the face of these perils, if there is any cure for our tendency to draw apart, it is through actually working together. There is a profound moral center to every serious effort at . . . cooperation whereby men seek to become what by their nature they are capable of being but are denied by all the forces that pull us apart.[108]

FOOTNOTES

1. Daniel P. Moynihan, *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding: Community Action in the War on Poverty* (New York: Free Press, 1969).
2. Edward C. Banfield, *The Unheavenly City* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1968).
3. Nathan Glazer, "The Limits of Social Policy," *Commentary*, September 1971, p. 56.
4. William Shockley, "Dysgenics, Geneticity, Raceology: A Challenge to the Intellectual Responsibility of Educators," *Phi Delta Kappan*, January 1972, pp. 297-312.
5. Arthur R. Jensen, "How Much Can We Boost I.Q. and Scholastic Achievement?," *Harvard Educational Review*, Winter 1969, pp. 1-123, 449-83.
6. J. H. Eysenck, *Race, Intelligence and Education* (London: Tempie Smith, 1971).
7. Christopher Jencks, *Inequality: A Reassessment of the Effect of Family and Schooling in America* (New York: Basic Books, 1972).
8. *Social Policy*, May/June 1972, pp. 2-32.
9. Alvin W. Gouldner, "Metaphysical Pathos and the Theory of Bureaucracy," in Amitai Etzioni (ed.), *Complex Organizations: A Sociological Reader* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1961), p. 79.
10. Eleanor Burke Leacock, "Introduction," *The Culture of Poverty: A Critique*, ed. Leacock (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1971), p. 18.
11. John Kenneth Galbraith, "Power and the Useful Economist," Presidential address delivered at the eighty-fifth meeting of the American Economic Association, Toronto, Canada, December 29, 1972 (unpublished manuscript), pp. 6-7.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
13. For further discussion of this point, see Allen Wheelis, *The Quest for Identity* (New York: Norton, 1958); George C. Homans, *The Nature of Social Science* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967); and Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).
14. Noam Chomsky, "The Fallacy of Richard Herrnstein's I.Q.," *Social Policy*, May/June 1972, p. 23.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 24.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
17. Walter Berns, "Law and Behavioral Science," *Law and Contemporary Problems*, Winter 1963, p. 200.
18. Aristotle, *Politics*, I: 2, 5.
19. Kipling was both dismayed by and scornful of America's granting citizenship to its former slaves, as he makes clear in his acerbic account of his travels in the United States. See his *American Notes* (New York: Standard Book Co., n.d.), pp. 56-59.
20. J. C. Nott and George R. Gliddon, *Types of Mankind* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo & Co., 1854), p. 79.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 189.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 260.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 56.
24. Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, *The Politics of Unreason: Right-Wing Extremism in America, 1790-1970* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), p. 48. In more recent, but strikingly similar thinking on poverty, "fit" has become "future-oriented" and "unfit," "present-oriented." See Banfield, *op. cit.*, who in discussing immigration to the U.S. notes that "The more present-oriented a group's culture was, the larger the proportion of its members who became lower class. . . . From 1885 to 1890, persons born in Ireland comprised 12.6 percent of the population but accounted for 60.4 percent of the almshouse . . ." etc., etc. (p. 59).
25. Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1955), p. 163.
26. Thomas F. Pettigrew, Foreword to *The Negro in America: A Bibliography*,

comp. by Elizabeth W. Miller (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1970), viii.

27. Shockley, *op. cit.*, p. 297.
28. Jensen, *op. cit.*, p. 29.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 95.
31. Jerome S. Kagan, "Inadequate Evidence and Illogical Conclusions," *Harvard Educational Review*, Spring 1969, p. 275.
32. Dr. Brazziel notes, for example, that Virginia Department of Education officials who provided him with pre-post test results for 1967-68 believed that "they had convincing evidence that their Title I program was a success. And this was one of the more conservative states in the Union and one with a record of slow starts in educational innovations. School people, it seems, are just now learning how to run compensatory programs. Or really try to." William F. Bazziel, "A Letter from the South," *Harvard Educational Review* Spring 1969, p. 353. In his article in the same issue of the *Review*, Dr. Hunt states that a proper assessment of early childhood compensatory education cannot be made until it has been in effect for "at least a decade or two" (p. 296).
33. James F. Crow, "Genetic Theories and Influences: Comments on the Value of Diversity," *Harvard Educational Review*, Spring 1969, p. 302.
34. Martin Deutsch, "Happenings on the Way Back to the Forum: Social Science, IQ, and Race Differences Revisted," *Harvard Educational Review*, Summer 1969, p. 524.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 552. Deutsch provides an extensive bibliography of scholars who confute the geneticists' position, among them J. P. Scott and M. Fried. Of particular interest is a quotation from I. Chein's 1945 article "On the nature of intelligence": "No psychologist has ever observed intelligence; many have observed intelligent behavior. This observation should be the starting point of any theory of intelligence, but such has, unfortunately, not generally been the case." (Quoted on p. 541.)
36. Richard Herrnstein, "I.Q.," *Atlantic*, September 1971, p. 56.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 57.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64.
39. See, for instance, *Time* Magazine's account of how Stanford University handled Dr. Shockley's request that he be allowed to teach a course in dysgenics, May 15, 1972, pp. 53-54.
40. Shockley, op. cit., p. 306.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 307.
42. *Idem.*
43. Eysenck, *op. cit.*, p. 151.
44. Quoted by William Chapman, "Inheritance Theory of IQ is Disputed," *Philadelphia Sunday Bulletin*, March 25, 1973.
45. See, for instance, *Title I of ESEA: Is It Helping Poor Children?*, a report prepared and published jointly by the Washington Research Project and the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund in December 1969.
46. *Time*, January 8, 1973, pp. 31-32.
47. Ashley Montagu, *Man's Most Dangerous Myth* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1942), pp. 13-14.
48. Chomsky, *op. cit.*, p. 25.
49. See, for example, the Congressional discussion of suffrage and the Fifteenth Amendment, as recorded in the *Congressional Globe* and published in *The Reconstruction Amendments' Debates* (Richmond, Va.: Virginia Commission on Constitutional Government, 1967).
50. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1967), Vol. 18, p. 395.
51. John Kenneth Galbraith, *The Affluent Society* (New York: Mentor Books, 1958), p. 30.
52. *Ibid.*, pp. 31, 32, 35.
53. *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1967), Vol. 18, p. 230.

54. *Reconstruction Amendments' Debates*, p. 32.
55. William Graham Sumner, *Essays, II*, quoted by Hofstadter, *op. cit.*, p. 57.
56. Summer, *Essays, I*, quoted by Hofstadter, p. 60.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
58. "Between 1892 and 1899 Rockefeller's personal dividends from Standard Oil amounted to between $30,000,000 and $40,000,000. In 1900 Andrew Carnegie had an income from his steel companies of $23,000,000. These revenues were not subject to tax. . . ." Galbraith, *op. cit.*, p. 40.
59. Robert L. Heilbroner, *The Quest for Wealth: A Study of Acquisitive Man* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1956), p. 200.
60. Michael Harrington, *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1962).
61. Oscar Lewis, *La Vida* (New York: Random House, 1966).
62. Daniel Moynihan, *The Negro Family: The Case for National Action* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1965), p. 53.
63. Robert B. Hill, *The Strengths of Black Families:* A National Urban League Research Study (New York: Emerson Hall, 1971), pp. 1-2. See also Andrew Billingsley, *Black Families in White America* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1968), particularly "The Treatment of Negro Families in American Scholarship." pp. 197-215.
64. Banfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 125-126.
65. Barbara A. Sizemore, "Social Science and Education for a Black Identity," in *Black Self-Concept*, ed. J. A. Banks and J. D. Grambs (New York: McGraw, 1972), p. 154.
66. Daniel Moynihan, "The Professors and the Poor," *On Understanding Poverty*, ed. by Moynihan (New York: Basic Books, 1969), pp. 31-32, 62.
67. Charles Valentine, *Culture and Poverty: Critique and Counter Proposals* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), p. 115. See also *The Culture of Poverty: A Critique*, ed. by Eleanor Burke Leacock (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1971), which is an anthology of critical essays by scholars in several fields.
68. Charles A. Valentine, "Deficit, Difference, and Bicultural Models of Afro-American Behavior," *Harvard Educational Review*, May, 1971, p. 143. It is clear that new models are also required for thinking about other minority groups. See, for instances "The Cardenas—Cardenas Theory of Incompatibilities" by Dr. Jose Cardenas and Ms. Blandena Cardenas.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 156.
70. William Ryan, *Blaming the Victim* (New York: Panetheon Books, 1971), p. 7.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 25.
72. Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Regulating the Poor; The Function of Public Welfare* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1971), p. 3.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 189.
74. *Ibid.*, p. 198.
75. Sam Yette, *The Choice: The Issue of Black Survival in America* (New York: Putnam's, 1971), p. 39.
76. *Ibid.*, pp. 62-72.
77. Philip M. Stern, *The Rape of the Taxpayer* (New York: Random House, 1973).
78. Those receiving public assistance in one major Eastern city for instance, fell into the following categories:

Aid to Dependent Children (1-parent households)	—76%
Aid to Dependent Children (2-parent households)	— 3%
General Assistance	—14%
Old Age Assistance	— 4%
Disabled and Blind	— 3%

Of these welfare recipients, only those falling in the General Assistance category could conceivably be labeled "employable," and all of these must apply for work at the State Employment Service once a month. However, a number of the persons in this group are too young to be labeled "old age" and yet too old to qualify for regular work. For these and other similar reasons, the

percentage of welfare recipients who "could" work is considerably less than 14%. (Percentages based on February 1973 figures provided by the Statistical Department, Philadelphia County Board of Assistance.)

79. Carl Rowan, "Welfare Money: Rich get Richer and Poor Poorer," *Philadelphia Bulletin*. See also Herman P. Miller, *Rich Man, Poor Man* (New York: Crowell, 1971).
80. Edward S. Corwin, *The Twilight of the Supreme Court* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1934), p. 20.
81. Heilbroner, *op. cit.*, pp. 171-199.
82. See, for example, the excerpts from documents relating to education (ranging from the Massachusetts education laws of the 1640's to the 1954 *Brown* decision and the early writings of Paul Goodman) in: *The Educating of Americans: A Documentary History*, ed. by Daniel Calhoun (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969).
83. Danield H. Chamberlain, "Reconstruction in South Carolina," in *Recorstruction in Retrospect*, pp. 93-94.
84. See, for instance, Leonard P. Ayres, *Laggards in our Schools* (New York: Survey Assoc., Inc., 1913).
85. Colin Greer, *The Great School Legend: A Revisionist History of American Education* (New York: Basic Books, 1972).
86. Jencks, *op. cit.*, p. 255.
87. *New York Times*, December 1, 1972.
88. Jencks, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
89. *Ibid.*, p. 29.
90. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
91. *Ibid.*, p. 96.
92. *Ibdi.*, p. 159.
93. *Ibid.*, p. 259.
94. *Ibid.*, p. 256.
95. In addition to the critiques of *Inequality* noted here, see also *Christopher Jencks in Perspective*, a compilation of nine essays by prominent educators published by the American Association of School Administrators in early 1973; and *Harvard Educational Review*, Winter 1973, which contains responses to Jencks by a group of social scientists and educators (forthcoming). It is important to note that student achievement is certainly not the only criterion by which the effects of school reform should be assessed. As early as 1968, Samuel Bowles pointed this out in his article "Towards Equality of Educational Achievement?" *Harvard Educational Review*, Winter 1968, pp. 89-99.
96. Henry M. Levin, "Schooling and Inequality: The Social Science Objectivity Gap," *Saturday Review*, November 15, 1972, p. 51.
97. Jencks, *op. cit.*, p. 11.
98. Bayard Rustin, "Equal Opportunity and the Liberal Will," *Washington Post*, October 15, 1972, p. B-1.
99. Richard Graham, "Tomorrow's Promise," *Washington Post*, October 15, 1972, p. B-4.
100. Charles A. Asbury, "Yesterday's Failure," *Washington Post*, October 15, 1972, p. B-4.
101. Robert A. Dentler and Mary Ellen Washauer, *Big City Dropouts and Illiterates* (New York: Praeger, 1968). See also *The Costs to the Nation of Inadequate Education*, a February 1972 report prepared for the Mondale Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity by Henry M. Levin. Using data from the U.S. Commerce Department and other sources, Levin and his associates estimates that males aged 25-34 in 1969 who had failed to complete high school would lose $237 billion in income over their lifetimes.
102. See, for instance, *Title I of ESEA: Is it Helping Poor Children?* a report prepared and published jointly by the Washington Research Project and the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund in December 1969.
103. *Time*, January 8, 1973, p. 36.

104. "A Conversation with Jerome Kagan," *Saturday Review of Education*, April 1973, p. 42.
105. Ryan, *op. cit.*, p. 241.
106. Galbraith, "Power and the Useful Economist," p. 18.
107. John W. Gardner, *No Easy Victories* (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1968), p. 16.
108. Kenneth W. Thompson, *Foreign Assistance: A View from the Private Sector* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972), p. xiv.

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